

Wantke-Pochmann House
SW. corner White and Third Sts.
Round Top
Fayette County
Texas

HABS No. TEX 3188

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS NO. 3188

WANTKE-POCHMANN HOUSE

Location: On the south corner lot, intersection of White and Third Streets, Round Top, Fayette County, Texas.
Latitude: 30 03' 49" N Longitude: 96 41' 53" W

Present Owner: The Real Estate Mortgage Corporation, Houston, Texas.

Present Occupant and Use: Unoccupied

Statement of Significance: It was the workshop where Johann Traugott Wantke built pipe organs which were installed in churches in various areas of Texas; later his grandson continued to use it as a cabinet-making shop. It is known locally as the "Little Stone House".

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. General History: As a part of the Stephen F. Austin colony, James Winn acquired 4,428 acres in 1831; the present townsite was included in this tract. Named after early settlers, the town was known as Townsend; later it was named Round Top since the postmaster lived in a house with a round tower. Portions of nearby Nassau farm were purchased by the German organization, Adelsverein, and settlement by German immigrants began 1845 to 1847. Some of these settlers began buying up the local farms and the town lots.
2. Ownership of the Property: Johann Traugott Wantke was born in 1808 at Schlusien, Prussia; there he was trained as an organ builder and cabinet maker. He came to Texas in 1857 with his wife and two daughters and settled near La Grange, Fayette County, Texas. He moved to Round Top about 1859 or 1860 and he purchased Lot 4, Block 29 in March 1863; he probably built the small stone building in the same year. Its primary use was a workshop for the building of organs and furniture; at times it may have been used for living quarters. In 1866 the Bethlehem

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Lutheran Church was built, and Wantke produced the fine pipe organ that is still in good working order; he also built the original pews for the church. He built pipe organs for several other Lutheran Churches in Texas. He died in 1870 and is buried in the Round Top churchyard.

Johann T. Wantke's daughter, Karoline, married Zollstin Pochmann in 1859 and they bought a lot in the same block. A son, Heinrich Gustav Pochmann, was born in 1860, but when he was only one and one-half years of age his father died. He was reared by his grandfather and grandmother Wantke. Although his grandfather died when Heinrich was ten years of age, the boy was trained in the family tradition to be a cabinet maker. Later he bought the small stone workshop from his mother and aunt, and operated it successfully as a cabinet maker. He did repairs for the Round Top Church organ, and about 1918 built new pews for the church.

3. Date of Erection: About 1863
4. Builder: No definite information is available. Carl Siegismund Bauer, the stone mason of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, was working in the area at the time the house was built.

B. Bibliography:

Bieseke, Dr. R. L., History of the Early German Settlements in Texas 1830-1860. Austin, Texas: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co., 1930.

Our God is Marching On, A Centennial History of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Round Top, Texas, Austin, Texas: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co. 1966

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The interesting small stone building was constructed to be a workshop for organ building and cabinet making. At times it may have been used as living quarters for an apprentice or others.

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2. Condition of the Fabric: Fair. There are some structural cracks in the end masonry walls; wood frames and sash need repair.

B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: One story with a floored attic; rectangular in plan, 19' x 30'. On the end walls there is evidence that there may have been shed additions of wood construction.
2. Foundations: Mortared stonework.
3. Wall Construction: Seventeen inch masonry walls of rubble ledgerstones of various thicknesses laid with heavy joints of sand-lime mortar. Outside was plastered with mortar, but little remains; the southwest end wall is partially plastered with cement mortar.
4. Framing: Attic floor joists are 3" x 6", 23" on center.
5. Porch: There is a 6' x 8' uncovered stoop of concrete on the southeast side of the house; it probably replaced an earlier stoop of wood construction.
6. Chimney: A fireplace at the northeast end of the house has a large stone chimney.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doors: On the NW. and SE. sides of the building there are two-panel exterior doors. Openings for doors and windows are segmental arches; masonry to form the square heads is carried by the wood frame.
 - b. Windows: On lower floor the double-hung windows are nine-over-six sash. Attic windows are four-light sash (NE.), and six-over-six sash (SW.).
8. Roof: The ridge roof, 12 in 12 pitch, is now covered with corrugated sheetmetal roofing.

C. Description of the Interiors:

1. Floor Plan: The larger, square room was the workshop for the organ builders and the cabinet makers. The

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smaller first-floor room was probably used as a kitchen at times. The attic space may have been used for sleeping.

2. Stairway: In the south corner of the building there is a steep "ell" shaped stair which rises to the attic level. Above the landing the stair is enclosed.
3. Flooring: The first level is now floored with concrete; it was probably covered earlier with flagstones. The attic is floored with one-inch boards, 9" x 12" in width.
4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: The masonry walls are finished in roughly applied plaster, painted white. The first-floor ceiling was probably exposed joists; it is now finished with a thin paperboard that is badly in need of repair.
5. Heating: In the northeast end of the building there is a fireplace with a stone hearth. It is a plain opening with no mantelpiece. An opening above for a stovepipe indicates that a wood-burning stove was used later.

D. Site:

The house is located at the south corner of the intersection of White and Third Streets. The old fence lines indicate that the lot size was about 45' x 115'. From White Street the ground slopes toward the southeast. At present the house is vacant except for use as storage; the grounds are not well maintained.

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